

## Timely Topics of Interest Concerning Labor Matters

It is true that the gas company has not paid its taxes promptly, and equally true that the company ought to come across.

It may be true—and we think it is—that the gas company ought to sell gas for a dollar a thousand. That question is awaiting the final decision of the courts, and pending appeal the gas company has put up a bond to refund the 20 cents a thousand now charged above the dollar rate in case the ordinance is held good.

But all this has no bearing on the question of allowing the gas company to build a holder in the northeastern part of the city. Those who oppose granting the company permission on the ground that the company is in no position to ask favors from the city ought to inform themselves. It is not a favor the company is asking. It is trying to better its service, and foolish indeed is the citizen who throws a single obstacle in the way. The erection of a gas holder in the locality selected by the company will better the service in a large section now poorly served, and will lessen the bills of consumers downtown. It will give a better pressure on the outskirts and reduce the overpressure in the central sections. In this way it will benefit all. This betterment means the expenditure of upwards of \$50,000, which will find its way into the channels of trade. It matters not whether the company intends to serve Havelock and University Place. The only figure this will cut will be in the size of the holder. If the company is seeking to better its service, for heaven's sake let us not throw a stone in its way. And to say that the company is asking a favor of the city when it asks permission to spend \$50,000 in betterments looks to this little newspaper like rank foolishness, to say nothing of shortsightedness.

Those who are astonished that Rev. Mr. Sillaway should make such sweeping assertions about lawlessness in Lincoln before he had been in the city long enough to tell the city hall from the government building ought to get wise to the methods of the average evangelist and the average social reformer who travels about telling us how to work reforms. They are all about alike. Had Rev. Mr. Sillaway told his audience that Lincoln was at least as good as the average city he wouldn't have been able to argue for a collection. So he got off the usual rot about the wickedness of the city. There is not much difference between the man who wilfully lies and the man who makes charges without knowing the facts. On the whole, we rather like the liar the best. As between the man who habitually lies just for the fun of it, and the itinerant evangelist who is forever telling us how wicked we are, and how much we need his brand of reform, we applaud most the liar. He at least entertains us. Evangelists of the Sillaway type disgust us. The only thing Sillaway accomplished was to give the opponents of temperance reform a new argument against the work he pretends to be engaged in. The fewer of his kind we have visiting us in Lincoln the better off we will be.

The beneficial effects of the Labor Temple are already apparent. Every day sees an increase in the number who drop in for a social chat and a quiet hour of recreation. The crying need of the Temple now is a good library, and this the managers will endeavor to supply. But they must have the co-operation of people who are interested in the social uplift. Good books, good magazines, good newspapers—all these things cost money, but money should be no object when the betterment of men is the object sought. As the days go by, and the Labor Temple becomes more and more the center of the social and industrial activity of the group of toil, the good people of Lincoln will realize that the men who have sacrificed their time and their energies in making the Temple possible have done a great work for Lincoln.

The writer had occasion to visit "Olly John's" Temple this week. It is a magnificent building. But we venture to say that if the Labor Temple Association of Lincoln had been given the same amount of money that the University Temple cost, it would have resulted in ten-fold more good to the men and women of Nebraska.

O, this injunction business is going the rounds—and we are glad of it! As long as it was used as a club to hammer workmen over the head the general public paid no attention to it. But now, when it is being used by the people almost solidly demanded by the public, it is a different thing. The people almost solidly demanded a bank guarantee law, and the legislature provided it. But it didn't suit some bankers, so they easily found a federal judge to put the kibosh on it. That hurt. Now comes a federal judge who enjoins the law fixing the rates that may be charged by surety bond companies. That hurts some more. We hope the federal judges will keep it up until the people rise up in their wrath and wipe out the whole damnable appointive federal judiciary. Just think it over for a minute. A federal judge who owes his position to political favor, and who is responsible to no one but himself, can nullify the acts of a legislature of a sovereign state, even though the law thus nullified is demanded by the people of the whole state and applicable only to the state. He can enjoin a governor from performing the duties imposed upon him by the people of the state. The English judge who would try to set aside an act of parliament would either be fired instantly, in disgrace, or put in an insane asylum. But over here we take it as a matter of course, and have so taken it until a federal judge can exercise more power than a legislature, a governor, a congress or a president. Federal judges can, and do, exercise arbitrary powers that the czar of Russia would not dare to exercise. Thomas Jefferson foresaw this dangerous encroachment of power, and warned the country against it. It is high time the country profited by the warning.

Last Monday night we saw a great crowd of men massed around the Oliver, jamming forward for the purpose of getting a sight of the champion bruiser of the world—and putting up from \$1 to \$2.50 for the privilege. That was all right, perhaps. At any rate it was purely the personal business of the men who were in the crowd. But we couldn't help thinking what a difference it would make in the social and working conditions of a majority of the men in that crowd if they were only as anxious to hear and learn from some one who could tell them how to better their lot. Less than a year ago a man who has more brains than the Honorable James Jeffries has muscle came to Lincoln and offered to tell his fellow workers how they could enter into their own. That man was Raymond Robins, the greatest orator in the labor movement, the best brain in the group of toil. But you didn't notice any great crowds of eager and anxious workmen jamming around to get near him. Robins spoke to a handful. Jeffries displayed his muscle to as many men as the Oliver would hold. And yet you are always hearing a lot of workmen complaining of their hard lot, and wondering if conditions will ever be better for them.

On the square, now, Mr. Workingman, wouldn't you be better off if instead of giving up two-thirds of a day's wages to see a prize pug you would show as much energy in seeking to learn from a man like Robins how to make your wages better and your influence greater? Think it over.

The socialists of Leipsic, Germany, have struck a great scheme. If it is carried out it will solve the whole blooming question. The children of the German socialists will be traded off for the children of the French socialists, and the children of the English socialists will be traded off for the children of the American socialists. This will result in the obliteration of race prejudices and make the organization international in the fullest sense of the term. It will be so easy to work out, too. The German mother will be eager to swap off her darling cherubs and spend her time in rearing the squalling brats of the French mother. The English mother will fairly jump at the chance to get rid of her blue-eyed and angelic offspring and devote her energies to rearing and educating the sloe-eyed sons and daughters of sunny Italy. It will be the easiest thing in the world to wipe out the mother instinct, to deaden the mother hearts and paralyze the mother love, and make it possible for one mother to part with her offspring in order that she may educate the offspring of some woman she never heard of before. It's a beautiful scheme. The only trouble about it is that the fellow who invented it ought to have his head bored for the simples.

Prof. Lucile Eaves of the State University put her finger on the solution of the whole question of corrections and charities last Monday when she said that the crying need of the hour was a system of state pensions that would prevent the separation of children from mothers whose only crime was poverty; and a system of industrial pensions that would prevent the squeezing of the lifeblood from the workers and then throwing aside like a sucked orange. Organized charity, juvenile courts, child savings institutes and rescue homes are doing a magnificent work in caring for the victims of a hellish industrial system, but what are they doing to remove the causes? We care for the product until it is old enough to hustle for itself, then turn it loose upon the world. A little later a half dozen men meet in a private office in New York and frame up a scheme. The next morning two million men are thrown out of work in order to make extra profits for selfish interests, and the whole tramp problem is again up for solution. We've got our whole reform system on backwards. We must quit dealing with the effects and set about removing causes.

We haven't heard a word from the Lincoln Woman's Club about our offer to arrange for the expense if the club would invite Mrs. Raymond Robins of Chicago to address it on the subject of women in the industrial world. The offer is still good. But it must be remembered that we refuse to pay the expenses of any one the club may invite to talk about "the care of oriental rugs." We are not interested in the care of oriental rugs. We are, however, interested in the care of men and

women and children, and we know where we can raise the money to pay Mrs. Robins' expenses if the Lincoln Woman's Club will agree to give her a good audience. Mrs. Robins will not talk about rugs, either. She will talk about girls and women with souls to save and bodies to keep. We hope the club women of Lincoln are as much interested in their sisters who toil as they are in rugs and tapestries.

## ELECTRICAL WORKERS

The Lincoln local is still working on its new wage scale, and things look good. "We'll be going some by the time the sun begins to shine on both sides of the fence," says Secretary Mayer.

No. 525 of Burlington, Ia., has opened its charter for thirty days, and as a result of lively work is adding new members every day.

No. 253 of Cedar Rapids is going some. Cable splicers have secured an increase of 50 cents a day. Others get an increase of 25 cents. Work in Cedar Rapids is a little dull right now, but the outlook is good. The inside wiremen are getting ready to ask for an increase, and of course they expect to get it.

No. 162 of Omaha reports that it is

getting the town lined up in good shape. No. 62, the linemen's local, is again in the ring and doing business. The work of organization is being pushed at a lively rate.

All locals in the district are requested to send in before February 1 the result of the vote on the assessment proposition. Secretary Mayer wants to notify all local secretaries before they send in their February reports.

No. 610 of Marshalltown, Ia., reports work slow, but prospects unusually good. Five new members were added at the last meeting of the local.

Work in Lincoln is a bit slack now, but not more so than might have been reasonably expected at this time of the year. The outlook is good, and the boys are all feeling confident.

## TYPOGRAPHICAL TIP S

We knew it! we just knew it! Ed Wright of Chicago has had another attack of cold feet. After getting a boom started for president of the I. T. U. he performs the same old stunt of getting out of Lynch's way. He says he has work to do as president of the Illinois Federation of Labor. That's all right. We hope he performs it, and we believe he has the ability to do it. But we do wish he'd quit jangling our nerves by this I. T. U. presidential symptom.

Third Vice President Smith of the I. T. U. was in Lincoln a couple of days last week. He was feeling around about the organization of the mailers, but before he got started he was ordered back to Brooklyn. That's always the way. No sooner do they light in Lincoln than they are ordered elsewhere, and Lincoln is left to work out her own salvation while putting up the per capita with regularity. It's a long jump from Lincoln to Brooklyn, too.

The Oklahoma City printers have just signed up with thirty-three offices, including all the newspapers, and secure an increase of \$2 a week. Mrs. Hertenstein, president of the International Auxiliary, has succeeded in putting President Lynch on record in favor of the auxiliary. It took six years to smoke the president out, but Mrs. Hertenstein accomplished it.

Bert Pentzer has been up on the Kinkaid ranch, looking after his fences and haystacks. Bert will never know how near he came to losing that handsomely framed picture of the Lome.

The annual ball on February 23 will be a winner. The committees are working hard, and as it will be a Labor Temple benefit it will be one of the biggest events in the history of the local.

Secretary Paine of the State Historical Society says he will see to it that hereafter the label appears on all the printed matter of the Society.

Cedar Rapids, Ia., printers are finding another dollar in their envelope every Saturday now. It is the second jump of a dollar agreed upon a year ago.

Say, how about nominations for international officers? Is Johnnie Hayes going to have any competition? Is James M. Lynch going to have another walk-away? Say, we're getting awfully slow. A dozen years ago union politics would have been boiling about this time of the year.

Jerome Jones of Atlanta nominates Sam DeNedry of Washington, D. C., for delegate to the A. F. of L. We second the nomination. They don't make wires that will carry any more current than DeNedry carries all the time.

## Side Lights on Nebraska Federation Convention

President, Frank M. Coffey, Typographical Union, Lincoln.

First Vice President, John C. Trouton, Federal Union, South Omaha.

Second Vice President, Will M. Maupin, Typographical Union, Lincoln.

Third Vice President, J. A. Booth, Cigarmakers, Fremont.

Fourth Vice President, John Lambert, Carpenters, Fairbury.

Secretary-Treasurer, Frank P. Hart, Typographical Union, South Omaha.

Legislative Committee: J. C. Lynch, Plumbers, Omaha; T. C. Kelsey, Leatherworkers, Lincoln; C. L. Widman, Cigarmakers, Fremont; S. A. D. Smith, Blacksmiths, Havelock.

Sergeant-at-Arms, H. H. Hyers, Machinists, Havelock.

Delegate to A. F. of L., M. H. Christman, Stationary Engineers, Omaha.

Place of 1910 convention, Havelock.

The South Omaha convention of the Nebraska State Federation of Labor was a credit to the affiliated unions. Less than eight months old, the Federation represents upwards of 3,000 union men, has fifty-five affiliated locals, all bills paid and money in the treasury. There were sixty-three delegates present when the convention was called to order. For two days and the half of one night the delegates buckled down to business and set the machinery of the organization to working in elegant shape.

Last week's Wagerworker contained the official proceedings of the convention, therefore this article will deal only with the "side lights." They were numerous and interesting.

In Frank M. Coffey the Federation has an executive who will make good in every way. He possesses organizing ability of a high order; he is an enthusiastic unionist; he is well versed in the law; he has had years of experience at the game, and he is in a position to devote a considerable share of his time to building up the organization. The fact that he was unanimously elected is an indication of the high standing he has in the labor movement. Already he is at work boosting for more affiliated unions, and his typewriting machine is clicking merrily into the short hours of every night as he writes letters to secretaries and insists upon their locals getting into the game.

Of course Frank Hart was re-elected secretary-treasurer. That was a foregone conclusion. He carried the bulk of the work from the time the Federation was organized, and made good at it.

A lot of people who hoped to see the Federation split on the rock of prohibition were sadly disappointed. The liquor question was not even mentioned on the floor of the convention. There is no doubt that a few men who were more interested in getting hold of some "easy money" than they were in furthering the cause of unionism, were trying to get it by holding up to the brewers the threat that unless they spent a little money the Federation would declare for prohibition or county option. "Come across with the coin and we'll stop it!" But the game didn't work. The officials of the Federation put the kibosh on that sort of thing mighty early in the game. There never was a time when there was any likelihood of the introduction of a prohibition resolution. And after the delegates assembled it didn't take long to see that the introduction of an anti-prohibition resolution would result in some fireworks, during the explosion of which some people would suffer from badly burned fingers. Good sense prevailed, however, and the liquor question was sidetracked for good.

Lincoln excelled Omaha in the matter of representation, just as it excels Omaha in the matter of affiliated unions and general interest in the work of organization. The Omaha machinists and Omaha printers took the belt so far as representation was concerned, each having three delegates.

The delegate from the South Omaha Barbers' Union introduced a resolution setting out a long list of complaints against the two Omaha labor papers.

"Referred to the committee on

grievances," said President Maupin. Then the delegates laughed.

Later the delegate complained that the president was a Joe Cannon.

The delegate from the Omaha Electrical Workers was seated and allowed every privilege. Just before the convention adjourned he withdrew. There's more than one way of skinning the executive council rabbit.

Delegate Kelsey of the Lincoln Central Labor Union was the oldest union man on the floor, both in point of years and membership. He was run a close second in years by John Lambert, who represented the Fairbury carpenters. Kelsey and Lambert make a good team, even if they show a few streaks of gray.

Delegate Hyers of Havelock was early on the ground, and he had his invitation to meet in Havelock going before he lit. He had the able backing of Delegates Jonas and Smith, and it was Havelock from the start.

Professor Howard of the State University made a big hit with his address on direct legislation. It was clear, right to the point, and interesting as well as instructive. It didn't take long for the delegates to see that their interests lie in pushing the league's work. Prof. Howard will be a welcome visitor to all future conventions of the Federation.

Elsewhere The Wagerworker publishes the address of Mrs. K. R. J. Edholm, secretary of the Nebraska Society for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis. It will repay careful reading. The address was complimented on all sides. The discussion of the address by Dr. Shindelar of South Omaha and Col. T. W. McCullough, of Omaha Typographical Union, were interesting. Col. McCullough explained the system in vogue at the Union Printers' Home, and the explanation was listened to eagerly. As a matter of fact the open meeting held for the purpose of listening to the address and discussions was about the most important meeting of the whole series.

The Omaha plumbers were the only members of the Omaha building trades section represented. The Carpenters, Painters, Plasterers, Lathers, Bricklayers and Cement Workers not only failed of representation, but they have not even manifested enough interest in the Federation to affiliate. This may explain, in some measure, the conditions now prevailing in Omaha.

The floor of convention hall is as smooth as glass, being used often for dancing parties. This was responsible for a lot of fun. About every so often a delegate would tilt back in his chair and kerslap! The chair would slide out from under him and let him down on the floor with a crash. Delegate Booth took three tumbles in two days.

The blizzard interfered with the attendance. It prevented the arrival of several delegates. Even the young lady employed to take stenographic notes failed to show up, and she lived in Omaha.

One think was overlooked. The constitution provides that all delegates shall show up a fair number of labels on their wearing apparel, but the sergeant-at-arms was not instructed to attend to it.

Of course the convention had to pose for a picture. It was printed in the World-Herald. By the way, the Omaha papers treated the convention handsomely.

**CALIFORNIA BUILDING TRADES.** Monterey, Cal., Jan. 17.—Delegates from many parts of California were on hand today when President B. H. McCarthy called to order the ninth annual convention of the state building trades council. The convention, which will be in session several days, promises to be the most important in the history of the organization. Employees' compensation and employers' liability laws, mechanics' and labor laws and the Asiatic invasion of the various trades are among the important subjects to be considered.